



REMARKS

Applicant thanks Examiner Patel for her time and consideration of the above-identified application during the telephonic interview with Robert Madsen on September 19, 2006. In the interview, Examiner Patel agreed that GROSRIEZ and ANNAND cited in the Official Action fail to teach alone, or in combination, the features recited in independent claims 19 and 23.

Claims 2-23 are currently pending in the application.

The Official Action rejected claims 23, 2-4, 7-14, 16 and 19-22 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over LEFEVRE DU GROSRIEZ et al. ("GROSRIEZ") US 6,602,575 in view of ANNAND ("ANNAND") US 5,540,354. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Claims 23, 2-4, 7-14 and 16 are directed to a stack of material sheets. Independent claim 23 recites the sheets are folded in the longitudinal direction and transverse directions to form panels of a single sheet thickness, and the sheets are interlinked by the panels such that a single panel of a first sheet is enclosed by two panels of a second sheet.

GROSRIEZ discloses a stack of folded sheets and several folding arrangements. In one arrangement, each sheet is folded longitudinally and transversely to form a two-panel sheet with each panel having a double sheet thickness. The sheets are intertwined by inserting half of one sheet (i.e. a panel) between

opposing halves (i.e. two panels) of an adjacent sheet (e.g. see Figure 6 in light of Figure 2). Alternatively, each sheet may have a C-fold arrangement, which includes two transverse folds and a central panel (column 4, lines 50-62). GROSRIEZ fails to disclose or suggest longitudinally and transversely folded sheets, forming panels of single sheet thickness, that are interlinked by a single panel of a first sheet being enclosed by two panels of a next second material sheet, as recited in claim 23 (Figure 1).

The Official Action offers ANNAND for teaching a stack of sheets of interleaved panels of a single sheet thickness having a single panel of one sheet enclosed by two panels of a next sheet, which results in a compressed stack. However, the sheets are formed by the C-fold arrangement (i.e. Figure 4 and column 7, lines 10-15). Thus, ANNAND does not disclose or suggest a stack of sheets interlinked by single thickness panels formed from sheets folded in both the longitudinal and transverse directions. Nevertheless, the Official Action concludes that it would have been obvious to modify GROSRIEZ in view of ANNAND and include a single sheet thickness to interlink the longitudinally and transversely folded sheets because the assembly would save space.

There would be no motivation to modify the stack of longitudinally and transversely folded sheets of GROSRIEZ. GROSRIEZ suggests the C-fold arrangement, and ANNAND discloses

the C-fold arrangement provides a compressed stack of sheets. At best, there would be motivation to select the C-fold arrangement of GROSRIEZ since this is the actual arrangement that provides the compressed stacking of ANNAND.

Moreover, even if one were to modify the intertwined longitudinally and transversely folded sheets of GROSRIEZ in view of ANNAND, the combination does not teach the claimed stack of sheets. ANNAND teaches a single panel of a first sheet enclosed by a panel from a next second sheet and a panel from a next third sheet (See Figure 4). Claim 23, on the other hand, recites a single panel of a first sheet is enclosed by two panels from a next second sheet. Thus, the proposed combination does not teach the interlinking structure of the claimed invention.

As neither publication, alone or in combination, teaches interlinking panels of a single sheet thickness in the manner recited, the proposed combination does not render claim 23 obvious. Accordingly, dependent claims 2-4, 7-14 and 16 are also not rendered obvious.

Claims 19-22 are directed to the method of producing a stack of sheets by overlapping two webs of sheet material, folding non-overlapped portions longitudinally to enclose overlapped portions, and subsequently folding the enclosed and overlapped webs transversely (e.g. as illustrated by Figures 5A-5D and Figures 6A-6D). Claim 19 is the independent claim.

Although the Official Action appears to rely on GROSRIEZ alone in rejecting these claims, the combination of GROSRIEZ in view of ANNAND will be addressed.

GROSRIEZ discloses producing a stack of sheets with pre-folded webs that are folded along longitudinal and transverse lines, or alternatively along two transverse lines to form a C-fold. GROSRIEZ produces the stack by applying and overlapping a first pre-folded web of sheets to the second pre-folded web of sheets, and transversely folding the overlapped pre-folded webs (i.e. illustrated in Figure 19). However, GROSRIEZ does not disclose or suggest producing the stack of sheets by overlapping two webs of sheet material, folding two non-overlapped portions longitudinally to enclose overlapped portions, and subsequently folding enclosed and overlapped webs transversely as recited in claim 19.

ANNAND does not teach producing a stack of sheets by folding two overlapped webs of individual material sheets along longitudinal folding lines and transverse lines.

Thus, GROSRIEZ alone, or in combination with ANNAND, at best, teaches producing a stack by pre-folding the webs, overlapping the webs, and folding the overlapped webs. As neither reference even suggests the recited steps of overlapping two webs of sheet material, folding non-overlapped portions longitudinally to enclose overlapped portions, and subsequently folding enclosed and overlapped webs transversely, GROSRIEZ

alone, or in combination with ANNAND does not render claim 19 obvious. Accordingly, dependent claims 20-22 are also not rendered obvious.

Therefore, in view of the above, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 23, 2-4, 7-14, 16 and 19-22 be withdrawn.

Claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over GROSRIEZ in view of ANNAND, further in view HEATHCOCK et al. 6,012,572.

The combination of GROSRIEZ and ANNAND fails to teach the stack of sheets recited in claim 23 as discussed above. HEATHCOCK teaches a facial tissue dispensing system for dispensing large tissues. However, regardless of the ability of HEATHCOCK to teach that for which it is offered, like ANNAND, it also fails to remedy the shortcomings of GROSRIEZ for reference purposes. HEATHCOCK does not teach a stack of material sheets wherein each sheet includes panels having the thickness of a single sheet, and each panel arranged such that a single panel of a first material sheet is enclosed by two panels of a next second material sheet.

Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 15 and 18 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over GROSRIEZ in view of ANNAND, further in view of WU Publication No. US 2003/0213810A1.

As discussed above, the combination of GROSRIEZ in view of ANNAND fails to teach the recited stack of material sheets as recited in claim 23. WU is offered for the teaching of a sheet dispenser having two obstacles lying on the stack. However, WU neither discloses nor suggests the material sheets are stacked as recited, and, thus, also fails to remedy the shortcomings of GROSRIEZ for reference purposes.

Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 17 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious of GROSRIEZ in view of ANNAND, further in view of WU and further in view of LETO.

Applicant notes that in the Official Action, the Examiner stated that GROSRIEZ and WIERSCHKE do not disclose that a stack of material sheets is arranged in a dispenser. It is unclear if WIERSCHKE is actually being relied on in the rejection or not, since WIERSCHKE is not in the rejection statement.

In any case, as stated above, GROSRIEZ fails to disclose or suggest a stack of material sheets as recited in claim 23. WU and LETO fail to remedy the shortcomings of GROSRIEZ for reference purposes as also discussed above.

Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, applicant believes that the present application is in condition for allowance at the time of

the next Official Action. Allowance and passage on that basis is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rt M', is written over a horizontal line.

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